DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 363 668 UD 029 545

AUTHOR Burnett, Gary
TITLE Chapter 1 Schoolwide Projects: Advantages and Limitations. ERIC/CUE Digest, Number 92.
INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, New York, N.Y.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO EDO-UD-93-6; ISSN-0889-8049
PUB DATE Sep 93
CONTRACT RR93002016
NOTE 4p.
AVAILABLE FROM ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, Box 40, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027 (free).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses - ERIC Clearinghouse Products (071)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Compensatory Education; Cost Effectiveness; *Disadvantaged Youth; *Educational Innovation; Educationally Disadvantaged; Elementary Secondary Education; Enrichment; Family Programs; *Federal Programs; Low Achievement; Low Income Groups; Professional Development; Program Implementation; *School Districts; *Supplementary Education
IDENTIFIERS *Education Consolidation Improvement Act Chapter 1; ERIC Digests; Hawkins Stafford Act 1988; Pullout Programs

ABSTRACT

Since 1981, Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act has provided school districts with supplementary services funds for more than five million low-achieving students. Historically, schools have used "pull-out" programs to serve this population, but the provisions of the current legislation, the Hawkins-Stafford School Improvement Amendments of 1988, allow schools with an enrollment of at least 75 percent low-income students to use Chapter 1 funds to create schoolwide projects for improving programs throughout the entire school. Considerable flexibility in the implementation of schoolwide projects is allowed, although there are some limitations. Projects usually include the following components: (1) supplementary and pull-out services; (2) staff development; (3) supplementary professional staff members; (4) family-oriented programs; (5) innovative practices; and (6) other enrichment programs. The benefits of schoolwide programs, in increased flexibility and improved services, are becoming apparent. Drawbacks do exist, however, including a lack of documented academic improvement coupled with high costs at some locations. Costs, time commitments, and the problems of program evaluation requirements also discourage some districts from committing to schoolwide projects. The as yet undeveloped potential of schoolwide projects means that their future implementation must be thoughtful and thorough. (Contains eight references.) (SLD)

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON URBAN EDUCATION

DIGEST

Number 92, September 1993 EDO-UD-93-6 ISSN 0889 8049

CHAPTER 1 SCHOOLWIDE PROJECTS: ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS

ED 363 668

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

UD 029 545

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON URBAN EDUCATION

DIGEST

Number 92, September 1993 EDO-UD-93-6 ISSN 0889 8049

CHAPTER 1 SCHOOLWIDE PROJECTS: ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS

Background

Since 1981, Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act has provided school districts with supplementary services funds for more than five million low-achieving students across the country. Schools have used Chapter 1 funds, whose allocation is based on the number of students from poor homes, to design programs to benefit low-achieving students. Historically, to serve this population, the majority of schools have relied upon "pull-out" classes which both isolate Chapter 1 students from the larger student population and, as many have suggested, limit the educational effectiveness of the programs themselves by providing little beyond remedial instruction.

Under current legislation, the Hawkins-Stafford School Improvement Amendments of 1988, schools with an enrollment of at least 75 percent low-income students may use Chapter 1 funds to create "schoolwide projects" for improving educational programs throughout an entire school rather than for implementing a discrete remedial program. Such projects are intended to strengthen the education of Chapter 1 students through enriching the educational experience of all students. This effort to bring broad educational reform to entire schools rests on the assumption that, in the poorest schools, it makes more sense to serve all students than to provide supplementary services to Chapter 1 students (U.S. Department of Education, 1990, 1993). Thus, through schoolwide projects, students who may just miss eligibility for Chapter 1 but who could still benefit from programs can receive assistance.

Chapter 1 legislation has permitted schoolwide projects since 1978; they were, however, rarely implemented prior to 1988 due to a requirement that districts match Federal grants with funds of their own (U.S. Department of Education, 1993; Millsap, Turnbull, Moss, Brigham, Gamse, & Marks, 1992). Since the passage of the Hawkins-Stafford Amendments, when the matching funding requirement was dropped, the number of schoolwide projects has grown much more rapidly than other types of Chapter 1 implementations, even though fewer than one-third of eligible schools had adopted the model by the 1991-1992 school year (U.S. Department of Education, 1993). Currently, more than 2,000 schools nationwide have schoolwide projects, the majority of which are elementary schools in urban districts (Millsap, Moss, & Gamse, 1993).

Types of Schoolwide Projects

The Hawkins-Stafford Amendments allow considerable flexibility in the implementation of schoolwide projects, although there are some limitations. The U.S. Department of Education's *Chapter 1 Policy Manual* (1990) suggests that projects may consist of class size reduction efforts, staff development and parent training, and extended day activities.

Thus, schoolwide projects vary widely across the country. To date, most schools have used schoolwide projects to reduce class size and to strengthen a variety of already existing programs (U.S. Department of Education, 1993). Other typical schoolwide implementations include the following:

- an informal process of student selection for supplementary and pull-out services to provide any student with extra support on an "as-needed" basis;
- formal staff development programs;
- the services of supplementary professional staff members, such as counselors, social workers, project coordinators, in-class teaching assistants, etc.;
- family-oriented programs, such as in-school parent centers, ongoing home visits, collaborative projects with family service agencies, school-based child-care, early childhood education, etc.;
- innovative practices, including the development of teacher resource centers, cross-age groupings, cooperative learning arrangements, augmented school libraries, etc.; and
- other enrichment programs, such as expanded field trips and extended-day or extended-year programs (Millsap et al., 1992; Gittleman, 1992).

Benefits of Schoolwide Projects

Schoolwide projects have generated widespread enthusiasm: they have been touted as an ideal method for providing underachieving students with extra help, and even as a means of removing the "disadvantaged" label from the poorest Chapter 1 schools (Gittleman, 1992). As yet, however, because many schoolwide projects are in the relatively early stages of development, there have been few full-scale evaluations of them, and it is difficult to adequately assess their impact (U.S. Department of Education, 1993).

Still, nearly 85 percent of principals in schools with schoolwide projects have reported generally positive results from their projects (U.S. Department of Education, 1993). According to these principals, those projects can:

- offer more flexibility in delivering supplementary services than traditional Chapter 1 programs;
- offer assistance to all students rather than to a limited population, while still serving traditional Chapter 1 students; and
- eliminate or transform many negative features of traditional Chapter 1 programs, including pull-outs.

ED 095545

In addition, some cities—like Philadelphia—with long-term projects have reported consistent gains in student test scores, grades, and attendance over more traditional Chapter 1 sites (Davidoff & Pierson, 1991).

Drawbacks of Schoolwide Projects

Despite the positive results of Philadelphia's schoolwide projects, such success is not universal. Schoolwide projects in Austin, Texas, have exhibited only minimal improvements in student achievement—and at a cost several times higher than required for other Chapter 1 programs (Fairchild, Christner, & Wilkinson, 1988).

Critics of schoolwide projects, in addition, suggest that many of the perceived benefits reflect administrative convenience rather than a true concern with educational reform or improved outcomes (U.S. Department of Education, 1993). They have also expressed concern that, because schoolwide projects make resources available to all students without distinction, they will be diverted from the students who need them the most. And, indeed, Millsap et al. (1992), in a nationwide study of Chapter 1 implementations, found at least one project currently offering services to its highest achieving students rather than to low achievers, thus subverting the goals of the Chapter 1 program.

Furthermore, like many educational reform efforts, schoolwide projects require substantial commitment at the local level as well as at the district and state levels. Not surprisingly, the degree of such commitment varies considerably. Clearly, schools that are pushed unwillingly into schoolwide projects by overly enthusiastic districts—an occurrence in a number of cases—are unlikely to demonstrate the commitment necessary for a successful program (Millsap et al., 1992).

In general, schools are much more likely to develop schoolwide projects if they are vigorously encouraged by their states and districts through workshops and statewide staff development programs. Indeed, Tennessee and Utah—both of which actively support such projects—have projects in 100 percent of their eligible schools. Conversely, several other states, including Montana and Connecticut, did not have a single schoolwide project in place as of the 1991-1992 school year. In fact, the U.S. Department of Education (1993) reports that a full 45 percent of principals of eligible schools without schoolwide projects were unaware that they were even an option for their schools.

Finally, evaluation regulations for schoolwide projects may lead districts to approach them with caution. Like schools with traditional Chapter 1 programs, schools with schoolwide projects that are unable to demonstrate adequate academic gains by their students receive technical assistance and other support for the improvement of those programs. For schools with schoolwide projects, however, such "improvement" can often mean the dismantling of the schoolwide project itself, leaving the school to either revert to its original Chapter 1 program or develop a new one from scratch (Clayton, 1991). Because of this—and because of the complexity of schoolwide projects—the short evaluation cycle built into Chapter 1 may not allow sufficient time for schools to show adequate results (Gittleman, 1992). Thus, the implementation of a schoolwide project may be perceived as an extremely risky undertaking.

Conclusion

Despite general enthusiasm, the available evidence on the impact of schoolwide projects is mixed, and such projects may provide little more than cosmetic changes to the delivery of Chapter 1 services. The implementation of schoolwide projects does have the potential of providing schools with significant local flexibility in fulfilling the goals of Chapter 1. For example, they can help schools to eliminate pull-outs completely or to redefine them as an "as-needed" service instead of as the core of a program. Despite this potential, however, schoolwide projects have thus far, in most cases, been limited to administrative changes.

Because of this currently unmet potential, whatever form Chapter 1 schoolwide projects take in the future, it will be necessary to ensure that they are developed thoughtfully and thoroughly. Otherwise, they cannot be any more or less effective than other models of Chapter 1 implementation.

— Gary Burnett

References

Clayton, C. E. (1991). Chapter 1 evaluation: Progress, problems, and possibilities. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 13*(4), 345-52.

Davidoff, S. H., & Pierson, E. M. (1991). *A continued look at the promise of schoolwide projects.* Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia School District Office of Assessment. (ED 330 709)

Fairchild, M. E., Christner, C., & Wilkinson, D. (1988). *What price achievement: A cost-effectiveness study of Chapter 1 and schoolwide projects.* Austin, TX: Austin Independent School District. (ED 300 507)

Gittleman, M. (1992). *Chapter 1 program improvement and innovation across the states. An overview and state profiles.* Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers. (ED 350 379)

Millsap, M. A., Moss, M., & Gamse, B. (1993). *The Chapter 1 implementation study: Final report: Chapter 1 in public schools.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Policy and Planning.

Millsap, M. A., Turnbull, B., Moss, M., Brigham, N., Gamse, B., & Marks, E. (1992). *The Chapter 1 implementation study. Interim report.* Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates, Inc. (ED 351 420)

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education Compensatory Education Programs. (1990). *Chapter 1 policy manual. Basic programs operated by local educational agencies. Part A of Chapter 1 of Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 amended by the Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 (Public Law 100-297).* Washington, DC: Author. (ED 323 274)

U.S. Department of Education. (1993). *Reinventing Chapter 1: The current Chapter 1 program and new directions: Final report of the National Assessment of the Chapter 1 Program.* Washington, DC: Author.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, Institute for Urban and Minority Education, Box 40, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, (212) 678-3433. Erwin Flaxman, Director. Wendy Schwartz, Managing Editor.

This Digest was developed by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, under contract no. RR93002016. The opinions expressed in this Digest do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of OERI or the Department of Education.